

Millennium Development Goal 8



TARGET AIMS OF GOAL 8:

- * Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory, includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction - nationally and internationally
- * Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff - and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction
- * Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States
- * Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term
- * In cooperation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth
- * In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries
- * In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies - especially information and communications technologies.

Scripture Reflection:

If your brother-Israelite is reduced to poverty and cannot support himself in the community, you must assist him as you would an alien or a stranger, and he will live with you. You must not charge him interest on a loan, either by deducting it in advance from the capital sum, or by adding it on repayment. Fear your God, and let your brother live with you; do not deduct interest when advancing him money, or add interest to the payment due for food supplied on credit. (Lev 25:35-37)

Food for thought

Global poverty is falling! The proportion of people living on less than \$1 a day fell to 18.4% in 2004.

In concrete numbers this is an estimated 985 million people, down from 1.25 billion in 1990 BUT poverty levels are still enormous. There are still an estimated 2.6 billion living on less than \$2 a day - (Source: World Bank, April 22, 2007).

* Debt cancellation allows countries to access their own resources for poverty reduction. Savings from debt service can then be allocated for health care, education, fighting HIV/AIDS and more - (Source: Jubilee Australia).

* Experts estimate it would take an annual commitment of \$10-15 billion a year to turn around the AIDS crisis in Africa which claims 7,000 lives a day. Sub-Saharan Africa pays almost \$15 billion in debt service to the wealthy nations and institutions every year - (Source: Jubilee Australia).

* The small amount of debt relief given so far has achieved startling results, including more than doubling school enrollment in Uganda, vaccinating five hundred thousand children in Mozambique and adding three more years of schooling for Honduran children. After debt relief and the elimination of school fees, 1.5 million children returned to school in Tanzania almost overnight. - (Source: Jubilee Australia).

* If Africa, Asia and Latin America were able to increase their share of world exports by just 1%, they could lift 128 million people out of poverty. - (Source: Oxfam).

Barriers to trade in rich countries cost developing countries \$100 billion every year; twice what they receive in aid. - (Source: Oxfam)

A story from the field

Columbans all over the world have been heavily involved in both the Jubilee 2000 Debt Campaign and also in the Make Poverty History Campaign of the present time.

A part of that involvement has been in raising people's awareness, especially in developed countries, of the crippling consequences of unfair trade arrangements and ballooning debt levels for poorer nations. It's through the many years of sharing the lives of people affected by these structures beyond their control that Columbans have come to understand the injustice which is primarily borne by the poor.

In 2001, the 'Running Priest' of the Philippines, Fr Robert Reyes, visited Australia to raise awareness of the impact and consequences of debt.

Thousands of school students and parish communities joined him in drawing attention to the plight of the poor and standing in solidarity with them.

How should we respond?

* Find out more about Campaigns like Jubilee 2000, Make Poverty History and Make Trade Fair Campaign. Join the Campaign or give whatever support you can. Tell others of what you learn.

* Write to your local member of Parliament asking that we speed up our commitment to giving 0.7% of GNP to our Aid Budget. Currently Australia is well below this internationally agreed target.

* Encourage your friends, family, school or parish community to use 'fair trade' tea, coffee and chocolate products widely available now.



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Youth unemployment rates 1995 and 2005 (%)

	1995	2005
Northern Africa	33.9	34.5
Western Asia	20.8	23.6
Sub-Saharan Africa	18.0	18.3
CIS	19.4	18.1
South-Eastern Asia	9.7	17.0
Latin America & the Caribbean	14.2	15.2
Southern Asia	9.4	11.3
Eastern Asia	7.2	7.8
Oceania	7.9	6.6
Developed Regions	15.8	13.8
World	12.1	13.7

Job prospects for youth have declined in most regions

To make poverty history